

Springfield, PA -- On Saturday, March 10, Congressman Joe Sestak, a member of the Education and Labor Committee, spoke at the John Freeman Education Committee Annual Benefit Lunch at the Springfield Country Club.

"I believe quality education provides the foundation for our collective prosperity, and that we must do everything in our power to ensure that our children have the skills they need to compete in an increasingly global economy," noted Joe. "That is why I was honored to speak at this year's John Freedman Education Committee Luncheon and be among so many distinguished guests and for such a worthy cause."

Since 1967, the John M. Freeman Education Committee has provided financial assistance, offered and supported enrichment and cultural programs, and sponsored college and job fairs for students in the First Baptist and Morton Communities.

Currently, it is providing semi-annual financial assistance, in the form of text book grants, to five college students. Annually, in June, the achievements of students and graduates are recognized at a special service and reception.

The late John Mack Freeman (1882-1968), moved to Morton as a teenager with his family, and almost immediately joined the First Baptist Church. Freeman served in numerous leadership positions at the church throughout his lifetime with an awe-inspiring zeal. The Church's Education Committee elected to name the scholarship after Freeman, "Because of his years of service rendered to the church; because of his abiding interest in progress by means of education; and because of his exemplification of Christianity."

This year the committee will bestow the first Helen W. Still Community Education Service Award. The award recognizes a community leader or organization that has made extraordinary contributions to programs and resources that support education in the Morton community.

The committee is also the administrator of the Stephanie Ann Bradley Memorial Scholarship. The \$500, non-renewable scholarship was established to recognize a high school student who has enhanced their community through Christian community serv until 1992. ice; and to assist

them in affording quality education in their chosen field of study.

Also speaking at the event was the Rev. Linwood Parson, who pastored at the First Baptist Church of Morton from 1965 until 1992. He founded the John M. Freedman Education Committee in 1967.

A teacher of history, Rev. Parson taught in Philadelphia for almost 39 years. He's served as the president and member of the Media Branch of the NAACP, Springfield Area Council on Race and Religion, Morton Civic Association, and the Community Relations Committee of Springfield School District.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

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